
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

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For Immediate Release

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HONDA, DEMOCRATS ANNOUNCE COMPREHENSIVE HOMELAND SECURITY BILL

*\$24 Billion Package Introduced to Bolster State/ Local Efforts to Protect Critical Infrastructure
Against Terrorist Attacks Contains Numerous Tech-Driven Provisions Good for Silicon Valley*

WASHINGTON, DC – Vice Chair of the Democratic Task Force on Homeland Security U.S. Congressman Mike Honda (D-San Jose) today joined with Democratic leaders and Members of Congress from across the nation to announce the introduction of the United States Security Act of 2001 (*USA Act*). The bill is a sweeping counter-terrorism measure that calls for \$24 billion in spending to provide state and local government with the latest in equipment and training to protect our nation's critical infrastructure. Unlike other current proposals, *USA Act*, and the previously introduced Bioterrorism Protection Act (BioPAct), are funded by suspending the top three tax rate cuts until 2007, and are not derived from other critical funding sources such as Medicare and the Social Security Trust Fund.

“The *USA Act* would give our first responders to terrorism the tools they need to prevent and combat terrorism on the state and local level and do so in a fiscally responsible manner,” said Honda. **“The bill would provide much needed funding that would enable state and local governments to work directly with information technology companies in updating and strengthening their networks and technology to protect our communities and critical infrastructure from further attacks.”**

The \$24 billion *USA Act* seeks to prepare America's public health infrastructure for new threats and secure all modes of transportation and the national transportation infrastructure. The measure would also protect America's critical physical and information infrastructure, including nuclear facilities, oil refineries, chemical manufacturing plants, electrical power grids and information systems. The bill also seeks to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to fight terrorism by improving intergovernmental and interagency coordination and information sharing among federal, state and local authorities.

Honda worked with business leaders from Silicon Valley to design a number of provisions in the Act that would establish new partnerships between state and local governments and the technology sector of our economy. The bill authorizes \$2 billion in federal matching grants to state and local governments for improving information security systems that was championed by Honda. One provision, drafted by Honda, would provide the Corporation for National Service with \$50 million to recruit information technology specialists who would work with state and local governments to improve network security.

Congressman Honda also secured \$365 million in University grants to train a new generation of IT security specialists.

According to Harris N. Miller, President of the Information Technology Association of America, **"We commend Rep. Mike Honda and the Democratic Task Force on Homeland Security for introducing the United States Security Act of 2001. This bill recognizes that to achieve better security for government--federal, state and local--we must be willing to expend greater resources. ITAA has been persistent in the call for new funding to improve the information security of government systems. *USA Act* is an important step in the right direction, and we are gratified that Rep. Honda is demonstrating his leadership in this vital area."**

"Representative Honda's initiatives are leading the charge in creating critical partnerships between government and private industry to develop the most comprehensive security practices -- with both physical and information security provisions," said Peggy Weigle, CEO of Sanctum, a web application security company in Silicon Valley. **"Technology must play a vital role in securing national infrastructure against cyberterrorist activities by protecting information systems where critical corporate and government data resides and key operations take place."**

Another provision authored by Honda calls for \$60 million to establish a pilot program to test the viability of real-time reporting of flight data including cockpit voice, flight data and cabin video using the latest in wireless technology. Honda also authored a provision that would authorize \$1 billion in federal funds to protect and enhance postal security, including \$245 million for new machinery to sanitize mail and \$306 million to develop and acquire machinery that detects biological hazards in the mail.

"It has now been more than three months since the attacks of September 11, and the United States still does not have a comprehensive plan to address Homeland Security," continued Honda. **"The *USA Act* comprehensively addresses the full spectrum of urgent security needs our state and local governments are facing and allows them to put the best people and technology where it is needed most— without pushing us further into deficit spending and jeopardizing important domestic programs like Social Security."**